

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /065 W
-----106494 231038Z /11
R 230903Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 684

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, RP
SUBJECT: 1978 ELECTIONS

REF: A) MANILA 722, B) MANILA 859

1. OVER THE WEEKEND PRESIDENT MARCOS REVEALED ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT THE ELECTIONS PLANNED FOR LATER THIS YEAR. DURING A JANUARY 21 MEETING WITH FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN AT MALACANANG, MARCOS SAID THAT THE ELECTION SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 2 WILL BE ONLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA (NATIONAL LEGISLATURE) AND THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL BE CHOSEN IN LATER, SEPARATE ELECTIONS, PROBABLY IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER 1978. THE FOLLOWING DAY, WHILE OPENING A REGIONAL ATHLETIC MEET IN VIGAN, ILOCOS SUR, MARCOS ANNOUNCED THAT THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA WILL BE "LIMITED TO 192 MEMBERS." HE SAID THE COMPOSITION WOULD BE AS FOLLOWS: 160 MEMBERS ELECTED BY DISTRICT, 12 SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVES, AND 20 CABINET MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT. MARCOS CONFIRMED EARLIER STATEMENTS BY SOLICITOR GENERAL MENDOZA (REF A) THAT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES WILL BE LIMITED TO 60,000 PESOS PER CANDIDATE AND THAT EVERY PROVINCE WILL HAVE AT LEAST ONE REPRESENTATIVE. HE ADDED THAT THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD WOULD LAST 45 DAYS.
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2. MEANWHILE, THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) HAS SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS JANUARY 24-25 ON THE QUESTION OF HOW POLITICAL PARTIES MAY REGISTER FOR THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. COMELEC HAS INVITED TO THE HEARING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO MAJOR PRE-MARTIAL LAW POLITICAL GROUPS, THE NATIONALISTA AND LIBERAL PARTIES, AS WELL AS OF

THE CITIZENS PARTY, (A SMALL INDEPENDENT GROUP FORMED BY SENATOR LORENZO TANADA FOR THE 1971 ELECTIONS).

3. COMMENT: PRESIDENT MARCOS AND HIS POLITICAL ADVISORS ARE STILL TINKERING WITH THE FORMAT OF THE APRIL 2 ELECTIONS. AS A RESULT, THERE IS STILL CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION ABOUT THE GROUND RULES. FOR EXAMPLE, MARCOS' REMARKS THAT THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD WILL BE LIMITED TO 45 DAYS CONFLICTS WITH AN EARLIER PUBLIC STATEMENT BY MENDOZA THAT IT WOULD LAST ONLY 30 DAYS AS WELL AS WITH A COMMENT WHICH MARCOS HIMSELF REPORTEDLY MADE TO THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSOCIATION JANUARY 18 THAT CANDIDATES WOULD HAVE TWO MONTHS TO PREPARE FOR THE POLLING. LIKEWISE, MARCOS' REMARKS AT VIGAN WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE ENTIRE CABINET WILL BE APPOINTED TO THE NEW LEGISLATIVE BODY, WHEREAS THERE HAVE BEEN STRONG INDICATIONS THAT AT LEAST HALF AND PERHAPS TWO-THIRDS OF THE CABINET MEMBERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO RUN FOR BATASANG PAMBANSA SEATS. THE TINKERING IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE UNTIL THE EVE OF THE JANUARY 26-27 BATASANG BAYAN SPECIAL SESSION CALLED TO GIVE RITUAL APPROVAL TO THE FINAL VERSION OF THE ELECTION CODE.

NEWSOM

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Message Attributes

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